

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

COUNTRY	East Germany	REPORT	<input type="text"/>	25X1
SUBJECT	<u>Thüringische Landeszeitung</u>	DATE DISTR.	19 February 1953	
		NO. OF PAGES	2	
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1. When the Thüringische Landeszeitung was first licensed by the Russians in 1946 as the organ of the Thuringian LDP, it was permitted to appear three times a week in large format, with an edition of 120,000 copies. Early in 1947 the size of the pages was reduced by order of the SMA, and the number of copies was cut down to 100,000 and then by successive reductions to a low point of 20,000 (late in 1948), after which it was set for a long time at 25,000. Beginning on 1 May 1951 the paper was allowed to appear five times a week, by decision of the Office for Information in Berlin, which also granted an increase in the edition to 30,000 on 1 March 1952 and permitted the Saturday issues to contain six pages instead of the usual four. Such an increase has not been granted to any other non-Communist paper in East Germany, and is alleged to have been due to an extremely great demand for the paper.
2. Although pre-censorship was discontinued in 1949, the Office for Information is even stricter than was the SMA in its examination of each issue after publication. The state leadership of the SED is also very critical of the LDP paper, supposedly out of jealousy because of a serious decline in subscriptions suffered by the SED journal Das Volk about the beginning of 1952 (amounting to 30%); the SED accused the Landeszeitung of cosmopolitan and objectivist tendencies, until Das Volk itself adopted a bourgeois tone in order to gain subscribers. For instance, the Office for Information criticized the Landeszeitung for its fashion reports with illustrations, on the ground that a progressive newspaper should not concern itself with such matters; but in 1952 Das Volk began to publish similar illustrated fashion news almost daily.
3. In 1951 the East German President Wilhelm Pieck sent a letter to the West German President Theodor Heuss, which the latter answered. The Landeszeitung published a report on this interchange in bold-face type on the first page, promising to print the text of Heuss's reply within a few days. The Office for Information telephoned Editor-in-Chief Klotz and asked whether he had a copy of Heuss's letter. Klotz answered that he did not, but that he assumed that the letter would be made available to the democratic press for publication; whereupon the Office for Information stated

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-2-

that this was impossible, since Heuss's letter would only produce confusion among the East German population.

4. Practically all political news is covered by compulsory ADN reports, for many of which even the headlines are prescribed. Therefore the Landeszeitung has put the greatest stress on cultural matters, and has found it possible to include some political implications in its cultural reporting. For example, in April 1952 it juxtaposed a long report on the work of the county "peace committees" in Thuringia and the text of a resolution of the FDJ demanding instruction in small-arms firing, pointing out to anti-Communist readers the inconsistency of Communist propaganda. A review of a performance of Beethoven's Eroica Symphony at Sonneberg on 26 March 1952 emphasized "the triumph of the truth over lies, the good over the evil, and freedom over slavery", which, the editors thought, meant more to an East German reader than to a West German.
5. Even in the cultural field the editors encounter difficulties. For instance, the staff once tried to obtain for review a book on phrenology in Goethe and Schiller, which had been published in the French sector of Berlin. Permission was granted only after 18 telephone conversations with the Office for Information in Berlin, which insisted on assurances that the book contained no monopoly-capitalist, imperialist, or cosmopolitan tendencies.

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